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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5735
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION PRIORITY 5648
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 5470
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS PRIORITY 0948
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA PRIORITY 0143
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ AUG 4239
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 1877
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY 5762
RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY 0197
RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE PRIORITY 0457
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 5255
RUEHDG/AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO PRIORITY 0211
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0117

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 001966

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TAGS: PREL UNSC AR VZ

SUBJECT: MFA OFFICIAL ON VENEZUELAN UNSC CANDIDACY AND GOA
PARTICIPATION AS INVITEE IN NAM SUMMIT

Classified By: CDA Michael Matera for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

¶11. (C) Charge, accompanied by PolCouns, paid a courtesy call August 29 on the new Director General of the MFA Office of International Organizations, Ambassador Raul Ricardes. In the course of the conversation, Ricardes (please protect) opined that it would be very difficult for either Venezuela or Guatemala to obtain the required two-thirds majority to gain the Security Council seat being vacated by Argentina. In this case, Ricardes said the two most likely compromise candidates were Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. Chile and Panama were also possibilities but less likely. He said the negative reaction to Chavez' recent visits to Iran and Belarus had damaged Venezuelan prospects. Ricardes stressed this was his own personal assessment of the situation. He said official GoA support of Venezuela's candidacy was unchanged and still firm.

¶12. (C) Ricardes also spoke about the GoA's participation in the upcoming Non-Aligned Movement Summit in Havana. He denied that the GoA's presence at the Summit as an "invitee" represented a policy change by the GoA toward the NAM. (Note: Argentina withdrew from the NAM during the Memem administration and has not participated in NAM meetings since then.) Ricardes pointed out that an "invitee" (as opposed to an "observer") did not have any official status within the NAM. He said one of the main reasons for attending the NAM Summit was to not be left out of expected discussions on UN Security Council reform. He noted that Italy, South Korea and others from United for Consensus would also be attending the Summit.

¶12. (SBU) Bio notes: Ricardes, whose most recent assignment was as ambassador to Greece, has a doctorate in law from the University of Buenos Aires. His doctoral thesis was on the non-aligned movement. From 1974-75, he studied at the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton under an Albert Parvin Fellowship. Ricardes served as the Argentine permrep to the OAS from 2001-02. Ricardes speaks excellent English. He is accessible and favorably disposed to the U.S. He will be a member of the Argentine delegation to the upcoming UNGA.
MATERA